



LETTER FROM THE MAYOR



Dear Residents:

Shortly after I was elected Mayor, I had the opportunity to examine in depth the City of Westminster financial condition. Using our new automated financial system, it was possible to analyze information over a ten year period. In reviewing the financial trends from 2001-2009, we looked at how well our current revenues cover our current expenses. The City of Westminster has been on a downward trend from 2002 through 2009.

The second trend I would like to review is per capita measures demonstrating the financial characteristics of the City over time. Expenditures per capita have almost doubled over the last 10 year period, averaging \$247. Revenues have increased 23% over that same period, averaging \$742 per capita. Long term debt is currently trending downward with the average per capita for the 10 year period at \$815. In reviewing these trends, it is clear that the use of one-time only and special purpose funds have been used to balance the budget. However, cash and investments have been reduced from over \$8M in 2000 to \$2M in 2009.

The nation's current dismal economic situation just makes an already bad situation worse.

What does all this mean? As the economic situation grew worse over the past three years, the City of Westminster has taken actions to help alleviate the disparity between revenues and expenditures and to scale down the size of the government. These measures have included:

- Staff layoffs, reductions and hiring freeze
- No merit or cost of living increases
- Modified employee benefit packages
- Increased employee contribution to health care plan
- Deferred Capital Improvement Projects
- Delayed purchase of cars, trucks and other equipment
- Limited conferences, tuition assistance and training to mandatory attendance

I presented a balanced budget to the Common Council on April 12. You will note that the budget is \$1.2M less than the FY2010 budget.

<u>Department</u>	<u>FY2010</u>	<u>FY2011</u>
General Government	\$2,048,239	\$2,040,686
Public Safety	\$5,871,685	\$5,866,686
Public Works	\$4,371,170	\$3,586,415
Community Support	\$ 152,124	\$ 100,743
Recreation and Parks	\$1,392,905	\$1,050,352
Total Operating Expense Budget	\$13,836,123	\$12,644,882

There are few increases contained in this budget. Other than increases in health care, pension costs and operating costs, only one contractual position in technology services will be converted into a permanent position.

LETTER FROM THE MAYOR ...*CONTINUED*

What is more important is what is not included in this budget. There are no merit or cost of living increases for employees, no vacant positions refilled, no reserve fund established, and no CIP projects, which totaled almost \$3.5M for FY 2011 alone.

These priority CIP projects include:

- \$1.6M for street milling and overlay for streets rated "deplorable"
- \$700,000 for replacement vehicles and equipment
- \$211,000 in technology improvements
- \$175,000 in repairs and renovations to City buildings
- \$855,000 in storm drain repairs and renovations

In addition to this amount, in the six years covered in the CIP, the need for capital improvement funds for additional storm drain repairs and renovations, street lighting, repairs and replacement of public works equipment, repairs and renovations on the Longwell Building and maintenance and improvements of City owned parks will total an astonishing \$17.5M!

In looking at the projected revenue picture for the next three years, the best case scenario is that our revenues remain flat. They are clearly not going to increase as rapidly as our expenditures will increase.

After studying this financial picture, the Finance Committee and I concurred that it is critical we deal with the delayed capital improvements to our infrastructure in the City. The longer we delay in repairing our infrastructure the more it costs. Delayed maintenance on storm drains can lead to major disasters like the Green Street sinkhole. This costs far more to repair than repairing the storm drain before it collapses. Some of our streets are in bad shape—if you have driven on Uniontown Road or Bond Street or a number of other streets lately, you don't need me to point this out to you. Our parks, ball fields and trails are utilized from dawn to dusk and need constant maintenance to keep them in playing condition.

As long as I have been on the Council and serving as Mayor, we have been putting off this crisis. I think the time has come to deal with this problem for once and all.

Reluctantly and with great reservation, therefore, I recommended to the Common Council that we levy an additional tax of 19 cents dedicated to fund critical capital projects.

For the owner of a property with an assessed value of \$250,000, this means an increase of \$475 per year. I realize these are tough times for all of our residents—they are also tough times for governments having to maintain services as tax revenues are flat or decreasing and aid from other levels of government becomes more and more scarce.

As much as we hate to ask for it, \$39/month is a small price to pay to insure that our streets are safe to drive on, our parks are preserved in playing condition, our storm drains prevent flooding, and our employees have the equipment they need to remove snow and cut grass.

The Common Council is discussing this tax increase to establish a dedicated Capital Improvement Project fund at upcoming budget meetings. The projects to be funded and the streets to be included in the multi-year street overlay and milling program are detailed on the City's website at www.westminstermd.gov in the Executive Budget Summary and are available for review at City Hall and the City Administrative Offices.

Sincerely,
Kevin R. Utz
Mayor

Crime Prevention Tips: Thefts from Vehicles

The Westminster community has experienced a marked increase in the number of thefts from vehicle cases over the past year. In the majority of the cases, the victim's vehicle was not locked and items of value were in plain view in the vehicle.



The Westminster Police Department offers the following suggestions to minimize the chance that YOU or a member of your family will be a victim:

- Always lock your vehicle when it is unoccupied.
- Don't leave articles of value inside the vehicle. Lock them in the trunk or take them with you.
- Park your vehicle in well lit areas after dark.
- Never leave your vehicle running while unattended.
- Know your tag number, make, model and year of your vehicle.

CALL THE POLICE IMMEDIATELY AT 410-848-4646 IF YOU SEE SOMETHING SUSPICIOUS!

Volunteer of the Year Award



Congratulations to Lori Graham, winner of the Westminster Police Department 2009 Volunteer of the Year Award. Ms. Graham was presented with this award a ceremony on March 17, 2010. She is pictured on the left with Chief Jeff Spaulding, Mayor Kevin Utz, and Councilman Tony Chiavacci.

Tree-Cycling in Westminster



By expanding our tree limb collection service to include Christmas trees during the month of January, the City has enough material to create mulch for City properties, with some to spare. Our Public Works Department estimates that they can make over

200 tons of mulch each year from the Christmas trees and other tree limbs "donated" each year. Nationally, "Treecycling" programs are sprouting up in communities everywhere. Trees that were once destined for the landfill (at a cost of \$60/ton) are now taken to a central location and fed through machinery to make mulch. In Westminster, the Public Works Department uses the mulch to maintain landscaping in our public spaces.

For something so simple, mulch adds tremendous value to your landscape. It insulates the soil and plant roots from temperature extremes, protects soils from compaction, allows water to infiltrate the ground slowly, and decomposes to add vital nutrients and porosity to the soil. Besides that, it looks a lot better than bare dirt!

TreeHugger News

The City has been notified that it will be recertified as a *Maryland PLANT Community* for the eighteenth year. This certification from the Maryland Urban and Community Forestry Committee acknowledges the City's commitment to being actively involved in urban and community forestry.



The Master Gardener's spring lecture series for 2010 includes sessions on composting, ornamental trees and shrubs, edible gardens, and shade loving plants. Visit their website to learn more:

<http://www.agnr.umd.edu/Extension/local/Carroll/mastergardener.cfm>

Historic District Commission Report

We are in search of motivated citizens who care about the historic buildings and sites of Westminster to serve on the Historic District Commission. The commission meets one evening per month, and conducts special projects as they arise. No special training or education is required! If interested, contact Tim Rogers in the Planning Department at 410-848-4628 or Mayor Utz's office at 410-848-2522.



WESTMINSTER HISTORIC
DISTRICT COMMISSION

We are currently in the early planning stages for the 2010 Holiday House Tour, which will showcase the lovely homes and churches of Historic Belle Grove Square. The tour is scheduled for Saturday, December 11, 2010, and will be held rain or shine (or snow).

For more information, contact Tim Rogers in the Planning Department at 410-848-4628 or trogers@westgov.com.

Top 10 Reasons to Grow a Garden

1. Save Money: The average family can save about \$500 per year on groceries by planting and maintaining an average garden.

2. Fresh Produce Tastes Better: Ever notice the difference in taste between a fresh home-grown tomato and a tomato bought at the supermarket?

3. Exercise: All the bending and lifting involved in maintaining a garden, from planting seeds to pulling weeds can really have a positive impact on overall health.

4. Get More Nutrients: From the time produce is picked off the plant to the time it is eaten, nutrients are lost. The fresher fruits or vegetables are, the more nutrients they provide.

5. Save Time: Growing a garden does not have to take up the entire summer. A few minutes a day can go a long way toward producing an amazing amount of fruits and vegetables.

6. Teach Children with the Garden: Children love to know where things come from, especially food. What easier way to show a child where green beans come from than to show them the plant the green beans are growing on?

7. Keep Children Healthy: Children are more apt to eat something when they are given the opportunity to help grow their food.

8. Save the Environment: Most produce found in a supermarket is not organically grown and many chemicals are used to help the food grow.

9. Increase Your Home's Value: Certain well-established perennials can increase the value of a home; blueberry bushes and grape vines are excellent examples of edible perennials.

10. It Is Easy: An amazingly productive garden can sustain a family with very little actual work done. Gardening is not back-breaking labor, but a fun activity the whole family can enjoy!



Did you know that Westminster Has Two Community Gardens?

If you join, you can have a plot of your own in one of the City gardens to grow fresh fruits and vegetables for FREE!

Please contact Melissa Hynes at 410-848-7967 or at mhynes@westgov.com if you are interested in joining the Westminster Community Garden during the 2010 garden season.

Recreation & Parks Events: May & June

May 8, 9am: Flower and Jazz Fun

Run. The Fun Run is held at the Wakefield Valley Community Trail (Tahoma Farm Road). There will be a 200-yard dash for children ages 6 and under starting at 9am. The one mile fun run starts at 9:15am for ages 7 and up. The timed 5K will begin at 9:30am. A \$20 donation is requested; a \$5 discount is available when registering 2 or more participants.



May 8, 10am—4pm: Flower & Jazz Festival. The Flower & Jazz Festival takes place in Historic Downtown Westminster and is designed for a leisurely day of fun and jazz. Delicious food and great entertainment will be offered. Local nurseries set up beautiful displays of unusual plants and shrubs. Over 100 craft vendors display a wide variety of unique items. This event is open to the public. Moms: Don't forget to visit the information table for your free gift! **Admission and parking are FREE! No pets please.** A vendor form is required. Call for more information: 410-848-4883.

May 12 & 19, 6:30-9pm: Mother/Son Date & Father/

Daughter Date. Events are held at Martin's Westminster and are \$60 per couple. Boys and girls must be K-8th. The evening includes dinner, dancing, games, door prizes, a 5x7 photo of the couple, parting gifts, and much more! Tickets are non-refundable and must be prepaid. A couple is considered one adult and one child—NO EXCEPTIONS. Tickets go on sale March 3rd; space is limited!



May 31, 10am: Memorial Day Parade and Ceremony. The Parade starts at 10am on Pennsylvania Avenue and ends on Church Street at the Westminster Cemetery. A memorial service will begin at 11am in the cemetery. For more information contact Daniel Bohn at 410-848-6179.

June 15-August 23: 3 on 3 Basketball. Five weeks of fundamentals and drills and five weeks of games. The league is for boys and girls ages 5-13. Fundamentals and games will take place on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6:30-8pm. Fee is \$30. Go to www.hoopeducation.com/carroll_county or email shane@hoopeducation.com.



June 26-27: Corbit's Charge Civil War Commemoration Encampment. FREE Admission. Activities include: Civil War Living History Encampment, Ceremony at Corbit's Charge Monument, guided tours of battle site, several Civil War era musical concerts, period artisans performing their craft, visit with Abraham Lincoln, period children events & games and view the daily lives of soldiers and civilians of 1863. Saturday 10am-9pm and Sunday 10am-4pm. For more information www.pccwrt.org or call 410-848-9161.



Westminster Family Center

The Westminster Family Fitness Center is a full service Health and Wellness Center for all ages! Features include many weight machines and free weight options, cardio equipment, aerobics classes, locker rooms and showers, and a game room. It is open 7 days a week, and memberships and daily guest fees apply. Call for rates or to ask about renting the gymnasium: 410-751-5501. Child supervision is available.

Westminster Municipal Pool

The Westminster Municipal Pool is open daily starting Memorial Day through Labor Day. The pool is located at 325 Royer Road and is open to the public. Pool applications are being accepted now! 2010 member fees are \$200/City Family membership and \$128/City Individual membership; \$260/County Family membership and \$146/County Individual membership. Call for more information: 410-857-5673.

Swim Lesson Registration

Sign up for the Stingrays Learn to Swim Program. \$45 per child. Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced classes available. Registration: May 19th & June 2nd 5:30-7:30 at the Community Building at the pool. *Parent or Legal Guardian must complete registration in person.* Contact Linda Kephart, Swim Lesson Coordinator: 410-848-0059.

Join the Westminster Stingrays Competitive Swim Team!

For more information go to www.westminsterswimteam.com

Summer Camps Available!

Day Camp is held at Westminster City Park and is designed for children 6-12 years. Children will have loads of fun playing games and sports, making crafts, going on field trips and swimming at the Westminster Municipal Pool.

We offer camp during all full weeks that Carroll County Schools are out of session for the summer. The cost is \$115 per week. AM and PM care is also available at an additional charge.

Tot Camp – Now offering 8 weeks!

Tot Camp is held at in the Community Building at the Westminster Municipal Pool and is designed for children ages 3- 5, who must be potty trained. Camp is 9-11:30am and costs \$60 per week.

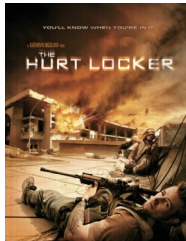
**Spaces Are Filling Fast,
So Sign Up Now!**

Carroll Arts Center Events: May and June

May 7, 8 and 9: "Pied Piper". The Carroll County Arts Council, in partnership with the Maryland Ensemble Theatre, will be presenting a fully staged musical "Pied Piper" on May 7, 8 and 9. After a competitive round of auditions and a rigorous 12-week rehearsal period, fifty young actors, singers and dancers will make their stage debut in this colorful family show. The show is based on the traditional fairy tale with a few humorous contemporary twists. Shows will take place on Friday, May 7 at 7pm, Saturday May 8 at 3pm and 7pm and Sunday, May 9 at 3pm. Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$7 for CCAC members, students under 18 and seniors.

Pied Piper

Friday, May 14, 8pm: *The Hurt Locker*. Presented by FLICC, this film won the 2010 Academy Award for Best Film. An intense portrayal of elite soldiers who have one of the most dangerous jobs in the world: disarming bombs in the heat of combat. As the men struggle to control a wild new leader, the surrounding city explodes into chaos. Tickets are \$6 for adults and \$5 for CCAC members, students under 18 and seniors.



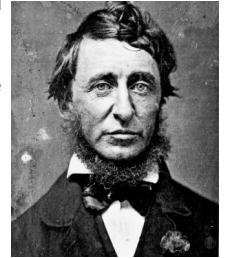
Saturday, June 5, 10am—4pm. Art in the Park has been a Carroll County tradition for more than 30 years. This year's events will be held, rain or shine, on the grounds of Westminster City Hall. It is free to the public. More than 50 artists and cultural organizations will be participating in this juried art show with many of them also providing live demonstrations of their work. On display will be paintings, drawings, collage, photographs, fine prints, sculpture, and stained glass. Entertainment will be provided by a dozen roaming musicians and dancers to delight the crowds. As always, there will be free craft activities for kids to inspire artists of the future! Festival patrons are encouraged to park free in the parking garage adjacent to the park. The event is sponsored by The Carroll County Times, Carroll County Recreation & Parks Department and the City of Westminster.



Wednesday, June 16, 7:30pm. Air Force Band concert. Satellite is a versatile twelve piece ensemble which performs a wide variety of jazz, blues and funk. The group's repertoire features a virtual anthology of music from the great jazz masters, such as Oscar Peterson, Miles Davis, Chick Corea, the Yellowjackets, Charlie Parker, and Herbie Hancock. Satellite also pays tribute to the Big Band leaders of the swing era, such as Duke Ellington, Benny Goodman, Count Basie, and Glenn Miller. With a fabulous vocalist aboard, the group also performs musical gems from divas Ella Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughn, and Diana Krall. The group's instrumentation consists of a four piece rhythm section (drums, bass, guitar, and piano) a four piece horn section (trumpet, trombone, and two saxophones) and female vocalist. The group is led by twenty-three year Air Force Band veteran Master Sergeant Allen Wittig. Admission is free, but tickets are required and can be obtained by visiting the box office or sending a S.A.S.E. to the Carroll Arts Center. Limit four tickets per household. Refreshments will be sold to benefit the Arts Council's Musical Instrument Bank.



Friday, June 18, 7:30pm. FLICC presents "Walden: The Ballad of Thoreau," not rated, 60min. The film is a stage play about the final two days that Henry David Thoreau spent in his cabin before leaving Walden Pond. The film begins with a short documentary of Thoreau's life, followed by a full production of the stage play performed before a live audience. The film won the 2009 John Muir Film Award and the 2009 Aegis Film Award. Sponsored by the Maryland Sustainable Living Fair, tickets are \$6 for adults and \$5 for CAC members, students under 18 and seniors.



Carroll Arts Center Galleries

Between Light and Shadow: April 22—June 5. The Carroll Arts Center will mount an exhibit inspired by the iconic American painter, Edward Hopper. "Between Light and Shadow" will feature works by contemporary artists that share Hopper's aesthetic style of mingling bright light with foreboding shadow. Landscapes and figurative paintings that reveal a sense of quiet solitude and private introspection, typical of Hopper's work, will be a strong element of this exhibit. The show was curated by Susan Williamson, the Visual Arts Coordinator for the Carroll Arts



Center. "Between Light & Shadow" will be on view in the Tevis Gallery of the Carroll Arts Center from April 22 through June 5. A special reception for Arts Council members is scheduled for Thursday, April 22 from 5:30-6:30 pm. The general public is invited to meet the artists from 6:30 – 7:30 the same evening. Local artists in "Between Light & Shadow" include: Charles Beck, Mt. Airy; Steven DeLuca and DiAnn Grimes, Westminster. Other artists include: Patrick Kluga, Baltimore; Frank Smith, Baltimore; Willie Schlossbach, Queenstown, MD; and Nancy Tankersley, Easton, MD. Gallery admission is free. The Carroll Arts Center is open 10am-4pm, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday Friday and Saturday, and from 10am-8pm on Thursday.

Rejected to Perfected: Fine Art from Recyclables: June 10—Aug 6. The Carroll Arts Center is pleased to jump on the "go-green" bandwagon for its next exhibit. Western Civilizations' throw-away society had its beginnings in the Italian Renaissance when Humanist writers espoused facts that Mother Nature would constantly replenish her resources. The early 20th century Italian Futurist painter, Marinetti, wrote a manifest to the movement that applauded industrial pollution as proof that mankind was moving forward in a positive direction. Enter the 21st century and industrialized nations are looking back, not to the Italian Renaissance or industry but to those countries, while appearing primitive, have been practicing sustainable living. "Rejected to Perfected" will feature artists whose canvas and media are not purchased at the art store, whose pigment will not pollute water sources but bring awareness to the beauty and functionality that can be found in the landfill, recycle bins and dumpsters. These creative artists think out of the box. "Renew-Reuse-Recycle" is their artistic credo. In addition, there will be a few other twists such as displaying the incredible bottle cap sculpture of "Starry Night" on loan from Finksburg Public Library, and we will be selling copies of "Do Martians Recycle" by Sharon Gribbon-Lindemon. The show has been generously sponsored by The Maryland Sustainable Living Fair.

